by some State Governments against the earlier decision of Government for phased abolition of the freight equalisation scheme of steel; and

(b) if not, by when Government propose to implement the scheme?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI M. L. FOTEDAR): (a) and (b) No, Sir. It has been decided to refer the matter to the National Development Council. The date of its next meeting has not yet been fixed.

Sharing of Ganga waters between India and Bangladesh

1365. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has recently been a high level discussion on the sharing of Ganga waters between the President of Bangladesh and the Prime Minister of India; and

(b) if so, the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Permission to FERA Companies to produce High yielding varieties seeds

1366. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Hindustan Lever and Sandoz India, the F.E.R.A. Companies have recently been allowed to produce HYV seeds in the country; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA): (a) So far only M/s. Hindustan Lever Limited has been allowed to proddce hybrid/high yielding variety seeds.

(b) Production of hybrid/high yielding variety seeds require high technology and sophisticated infrastructural facilities to produce such seeds. In view of this production of such seeds has been included in the Appendix-I of the industrial Policy Statement of 2nd February, 1973 so that if multi-national and F.E.R.A. Companies also want to enter this field they may do so subject to certain conditions. This would supplement our efforts in making available hybrid/high yielding variety seeds to the farmers particularly of oilseeds and pulses.

Drinking water to problem villages

1367. SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE:
SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in 1986-87 more than 40,000 and in 1987-88, about 55,000 problem villages were to be provided with safe drinking water; and

(b) the state-wise progress made so far in this regard alongwith the expenditure incurred so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAMANAND YADAV): (a) and (b) As against a target for coverage of 35930 villages in 1986-87, 48,350 villages were provided with safe drinking water facilities. In 1987-88 the target is 50,570 villages. Reported coverage upto June, 1987 is 9,774 villages. State-wise details are given in the enclosed statement-I (*See* below). Statement-II is enclosed showing expenditure (provisional) incurred during 1986-87 and under the Centrally Sponsored Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and upto June, 1987 during 1987-88, under State Sector Minimum Needs Programme (MNP) as reported by States/Union Territories. [*See* Appendix CXLIII, Annexure No. 61]